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TAGS: PGOV PREL PINR IIZ  
SUBJECT: SALAH AD DIN: PROVINCIAL COUNCIL ELECTS IIP  
GOVERNOR

Classified By: Deputy Political Counselor John G. Fox for reason 1.4 (b).

(U) This is a Salah ad Din PRT reporting cable.

Summary

¶1. (C) In its first official session on April 12, the Salah ad-Din (SaD) Provincial Council (PC) elected all key leaders.

The Governor-elect is Mutashar Hussien Allawi Yaseen, an Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP) PC member from Samarra. According to PRT contacts, the new PC leadership resulted from a political bargain between the former Provincial Assistant for Security Affairs Ahmed Abdullah Abid Khalaf (Abu Mazin) and a group of Samarra-based PC members. All incoming and outgoing provincial leaders promised to cooperate in an orderly transfer of power. The PC's leadership choices show a gain in influence for Samarra-based politicians. Biographic information on the new PC leadership is at paragraphs 7-11.  
END SUMMARY.

PC Chooses New Leadership

¶12. (C) The SaD PC met on April 12 and elected all its leadership positions. According to PRT contacts, former Provincial Assistant for Security Affairs Ahmed Abdullah Abid Khalaf (Abu Mazin) and a group of Samarra-based PC members led by Governor-elect Mutashar Hussien Allawi Yaseen reached an agreement on candidates for the leadership positions in advance of the meeting. Hoping anonymity would encourage some PC members to defect from the Abu Mazin-Samarra coalition, ex-Governor Hamad Hamood Shekti and ex-Deputy Governor Abdullah Jebara led a motion to elect the positions via secret ballot.

¶13. (SBU) After a lengthy debate on whether voting should be conducted openly or in secret, the PC members decided on an open vote and quickly reached agreement on the following provincial leadership positions:

-- Governor: Mutashar Hussien Allawi Yaseen (Tawafuq/Iraqi Islamic Party)

-- Deputy Governor for Public Affairs: Ahmed Abed al-Jabar Ali Kareem (Salah ad-Din National List)

-- Deputy Governor for Local Affairs: Dr. Ameed Azeez Jiwad Qader (Brotherhood and Peaceful Coexistence List)

-- PC Chairman: Ahmed Abdullah Abid Khalaf, aka Abu Mazin (Iraqi National List)

-- Deputy PC Chairman: Khalid Hassan Mahdi Salih (Iraqi Scholars and Intellectuals Society)

Leaders Promise Orderly Transition

¶14. (C) The outgoing provincial leadership has responded well

to the election and promised to cooperate in a smooth transfer of authority. In his first statement to the media following the PC meeting, outgoing Deputy Governor Abdullah Jebara told Salah ad-Din TV said that he would &continue to serve the Iraqi people, but from a different desk.<sup>8</sup> PRT staff met with Abdullah at his office on April 13, where he was already briefing Deputy Governor-elect Ahmed Abed al-Jabar Ali Kareem (Abu Abdullah) on his new responsibilities. Separately, PRT staff met with outgoing Governor Hamad Hamood Shekti who said that he would work closely with the new leadership to ensure a smooth transition of power. He added that he was considering running for the Council of Representatives (CoR) in the upcoming legislative elections.

¶15. (C) In an April 13 introductory call with the PRT, Governor-elect Mutashar Hussian Allawi Yaseen said he did not plan to make any public comments until the results of the PC election were confirmed by the National Government. Mutasher said that he planned to focus on enhancing support to agricultural areas and neglected regions of the province, such as Samarra. He said that his administration would continue to work closely with the PRT and CF.

Comment

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¶16. (C) The new leadership, which does not include any incumbent officials, marks a decisive break with the political order that has held sway in SaD since 2005. Samarra-based PC members are much more heavily represented in the new leadership and can be expected to advocate aggressively for their districts, which were perceived as having been neglected by the provincial government under the old leadership. PRT contacts have repeatedly credited Abu Mazin's political prowess with knitting together the coalition that decided the key leadership positions. While ex-Deputy Governor Abdullah Jebara's failed bid for the governorship is a public defeat, he has so far been gracious and statesman-like in his public and private statements. Abdullah remains an influential elected official with abundant resources, bases of support and substantive political experience.

Biographic Data

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¶17. (C) Governor: Mutashar Hussian Allawi Yaseen (DOB: 1955; Kunya Abu Harith; Tribe al-Nisani) is an agricultural engineer from Samarra who served as the Chairman of the Samarra City Council from 2004-2006. Mutasher's priorities include improving essential services and agricultural and initiatives. Mutasher speaks basic English.

¶18. (S) Deputy Governor for Public Affairs: Ahmed Abed-Al-Jabar Ali Kareem (DOB: July 23, 1976; Kunya Abu Abdullah; Tribe Samarrai/Abu Issa Clan) is from Mukashifa. He is the youngest member elected to the new Provincial Council. In 2003, he graduated with a bachelor degree in commerce and then ran a small import and export company. In approximately 2004, Abu Abdullah traveled to Dubai for one year. He returned to Iraq in order to get involved in politics and took up a position as the nayha director for al-Dujeil. He credits his success in the provincial elections to the tribal respect for his brother, Sheik Shalan Abd-al-Jabar Ali Kareem, who is the Sheik of the Abu Issa clan of the Samarrai tribe. His brother was detained by CF on February 2008. Abu Abdullah successfully petitioned CF for his brother's release in March 2009. Abu Abdullah has told the PRT that his political priorities include improving infrastructure, tackling corruption, and attracting foreign investment.

¶19. (C) Deputy Governor for Public Affairs: Ahmed Abed Al-Jabar Ali Kareem (DOB 1973; Kunya unknown; Tribe unknown) holds a PhD in Islamic Studies, and currently resides in Tuz. While he is Kurdish in origin, he graduated from high school in Tikrit and worked as an Imam at the Great Mosque in

Tikrit. He was also a professor for the College of Education for Women at Tikrit University. Prior to elections, he spent four years as a professor of Islamic Law at Kirkuk University. In 2005, he declined an offer by the Kurdistan Union to serve on the Provincial Council. His political priorities include reducing ethnic tensions between Arabs and Kurds and improving service delivery in the Tuz area.

¶10. (S) PC Chairman Ahmed Abdullah Abid Khalaf, aka Abu Mazin (DOB approx. 1968; Kunya Abu Mazin; al-Jaboori) is a prominent figure the Bayji area. He received the highest number of votes across the Salah ad-Din Province during the 2009 Provincial Elections. Abu Mazin has served as the Governor's Assistant for Security Affairs since 2005. He has had a bitter political rivalry with ex-D/Gov Abdullah Jebara and played a role in attempts to exclude Abdullah from the provincial election on de-Ba'athication grounds.

¶11. (SBU) Deputy PC Chairman Khalid Hassan Mahdi Salih (DOB approx. 1961; Kunya unknown; Tribe Unknown) is an engineer from Samarra who currently serves as the Director General of Roads and Bridges for Salah ad-Din province. His priorities include improving the reach and quality provincial services delivery.

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